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Guenther
spread undercover opera-

U.S. Quick to Attack New Bonn Spy Charge

Denies Claim That West German Official
Was Identified in CIA Report as Red Agent

BY JOE ALEX MORRIS JR.

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BONN — West Germany's latest spy "scandal" appears to be fabricated from thin air. But it has evoked some curious reaction, not the least of which comes from Washington.

Some political quarters here attribute this to the nervousness that followed Willy Brandt's abrupt departure from the chancellor's office less than three weeks ago. It was because of a Communist spy scandal—this was real—that Brandt quit, and his successors are understandably sensitive about the word espionage.

In the latest development, the business magazine Capital alleged that a U.S. Central Intelligence Agency report had identified Guenther Nollau, head of the Office for the Protection of the Constitution, as a Communist agent. This office is the West German equivalent of the FBI, and Nollau is also a member of NATO's special committee on intelligence, for which he has "cosmic" — the highest — security clearance.

Within hours of the broadcasting of the report, the denials began pouring in. Curiously, the first and the strongest ones came from Washington.

The U.S. government flatly denied the existence of "such a report on Herr Nollau, as reported in the magazine Capital." Washington went even further and denied that either Nollau or anyone in his agency was viewed with suspicion by the CIA—a pretty broad statement in view of the CIA's wide-

spread undercover opera-

Equally curiously, there was no official statement from the West German government Wednesday, although Chancellor Helmut Schmidt conferred with top officials on the allegations. The foreign Ministry here took the American denials as its cue to inform the Interior Ministry, responsible for Nollau's organization, that the Americans had reported there was "not a word of truth" in the Capital story.

The American statements on the report did not go anywhere near that far. They simply denied CIA or any other American involvement in any investigation of Nollau or persons on his staff.

The U.S. readiness to get involved in what amounted to little more than allegations by a magazine was seen here as highly unusual. Reportedly, it followed urgent contacts between Bonn and Washington.

Why the Bonn government waited almost a full 24 hours before putting out its own denial Thursday afternoon was another mystery. Then it called a press conference where, among other things, a spokesman tried to put across the impression that the political opposition here was behind it all.

He revealed that the government had first learned of the Capital story from a Bavarian politician. But Chancellor Schmidt then declined to meet with editors of the magazine, who offered to show him their material.

The 63-year-old Nollau, a lawyer from Dresden who fled East Germany in 1950 and went to work almost immediately thereafter for the office he now heads, issued a statement denouncing the report as all lies and said he planned court action. He also continued his vacation in Bad Polz and apparently planned to go back to work on schedule.

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